

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

1. (Currently Amended) A system ~~for detecting a removal of a device from a connection thereof to a communications network, the system~~ comprising:

a digital cable host device;

a point-of-deployment module coupled to the digital cable host device;

a communications network at least initially having a connection to the digital cable host device;

a server comprising an interface for receiving, from the digital cable host device, signals through the communications network, the signals indicating continuity of the connection, each of the signals containing information identifying the device; and a server;

a database associated with the server, the database comprising a record with contact information for a user of the digital cable host device together with the information identifying the device, the database being populated based on an authorization process for the digital cable host device and the point-of-deployment module;

wherein:

the digital cable host device is configured to generate the signals with the information identifying the device; and

the server being is configured such that:

responsive to receipt of a first one of the signals, the server determines whether a second one of the signals is received within a period from the receipt of the first signal; and

the server generates an alert to prompt an operator of the communications network to contact [[a]] the user of the device if it is determined that the second signal is not received within the period, the alert including the contact information for the user from the database, the contact information being identified based on the information identifying the device.

2. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications network includes a two-way multichannel delivery network.
3. (Original) The system according to claim 2, wherein the delivery network includes a cable TV network.
4. (Original) The system according to claim 3, wherein the cable TV network includes a hybrid fiber coaxial (HFC) cable network.
5. (Original) The system according to claim 3, wherein the device receives programming content from the communications network.
6. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 5, wherein the ~~device includes a host device having an interface for coupling with a~~ point-of-deployment (POD) module ~~for providing~~ provides conditional access to selected programming content.
7. (Original) The system according to claim 6, wherein the selected programming content is selected by the system.
8. (Original) The system according to claim 6, wherein the selected programming content includes video-on-demand (VOD) content.
9. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the information includes a serial number pre-assigned to the device.
10. (Withdrawn) A system for tracking a device connectable to a communications network through one of a plurality of nodes, the nodes being associated with respective ones of service areas, the device being identifiable by identifying data, the system comprising:

an interface for receiving, through a first node, a request for connection of the device to the communications network after the device has been connected to the communications network through a second node, the request including information concerning the device; and

a server for determining whether at least part of the information corresponds to the identifying data, the first node being identified through which the request is received if it is determined that at least part of the information corresponds to the identifying data, whereby the device is presumed to be located in the service area associated with the first node.

11. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 10, further comprising a mechanism for causing the device to generate a detectable signal to facilitate locating the device within the service area associated with the first node.

12. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 10, wherein the detectable signal contains information for identifying the device.

13. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 10, wherein the communications network includes a two-way multichannel delivery network.

14. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 13, wherein the delivery network includes a cable TV network.

15. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 14, wherein the cable TV network includes an HFC cable network.

16. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 14, wherein the device receives programming content from the communications network.

17. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 16, wherein the device includes a host device having an interface for coupling with a POD module for providing conditional access to selected programming content.

18. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 17, wherein the selected programming content is selected by the system.

19. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 17, wherein the selected programming content includes VOD content.

20. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 10, wherein the identifying data includes a serial number pre-assigned to the device.

21. (Withdrawn) Apparatus for receiving programming content from a communications network, the apparatus being identifiable by identifying data, the apparatus comprising:

an interface for coupling with a device for effecting a communication to a server through the communications network, the communication including the identifying data, and an address of the device within the communications network; and

a transmission mechanism, a message being sent to the address if the apparatus has been removed from a connection to the communications network without authorization, the message causing the transmission mechanism to generate a detectable signal for locating the apparatus.

22. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the address includes an Internet protocol (IP) address.

23. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the address includes a media access control (MAC) address.

24. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the identifying data includes a serial number pre-assigned to the apparatus.

25. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the detectable signal contains information concerning a serial number pre-assigned to the apparatus.

26. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 21, further comprising a modem for modulating signals representing the communication.

27. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 21 comprising an entertainment unit.

28. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the entertainment unit includes a TV unit.

29. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for use in a system for detecting a removal of a device from a connection thereof to a communications network~~, the method comprising:

receiving, from [[the]] a digital cable host device having a point-of-deployment module coupled thereto, signals through [[the]] a communications network, the signals indicating continuity of [[the]] a connection between the digital cable host device and the network, each of the signals containing information identifying the device;

in response to receipt of a first one of the signals, determining whether a second one of the signals is received within a period from the receipt of the first signal; and

if it is determined that the second signal is not received within the period:

accessing a database comprising a record with contact information for a user of the digital cable host device together with the information identifying the device, the database being populated based on an authorization process for the digital cable host device and the point-of-deployment module, the database being accessed to obtain the contact information based on the information identifying the device contained in the first one of the signals; and

generating an alert to prompt an operator of the communications network to contact [[a]] the user of the device, the alert including the contact information for the user from the database ~~if it is determined that the second signal is not received within the period.~~

30. (Original) The method according to claim 29, wherein the communications network includes a two-way multichannel delivery network.

31. (Original) The method according to claim 30, wherein the delivery network includes a cable TV network.

32. (Original) The method according to claim 31, wherein the cable TV network includes an HFC cable network.

33. (Original) The method according to claim 31, wherein the device receives programming content from the communications network.

34. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 33, ~~wherein the device includes a host device having an interface for coupling with a point-of-deployment (POD) module~~ for further comprising providing conditional access to selected programming content with the point-of-deployment module.

35. (Original) The method according to claim 34, wherein the selected programming content is selected by the system.

36. (Original) The method according to claim 34, wherein the selected programming content includes video-on-demand (VOD) content.

37. (Original) The method according to claim 29, wherein the information includes a serial number pre-assigned to the device.

38. (Withdrawn) A method for tracking a device connectable to a communications network through one of a plurality of nodes, the nodes being associated with respective ones of service areas, the device being identifiable by identifying data, the method comprising:

receiving, through a first node, a request for connection of the device to the communications network after the device has been connected to the communications

network through a second node, the request including information concerning the device;  
and

determining whether at least part of the information corresponds to the identifying data, the first node being identified through which the request is received if it is determined that at least part of the information corresponds to the identifying data, whereby the device is presumed to be located in the service area associated with the first node.

39. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 38, further comprising causing the device to generate a detectable signal to facilitate locating the device within the service area associated with the first node.

40. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 38, wherein the detectable signal contains information for identifying the device.

41. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 38, wherein the communications network includes a two-way multichannel delivery network.

42. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 41, wherein the delivery network includes a cable TV network.

43. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 42, wherein the cable TV network includes an HFC cable network.

44. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 42, wherein the device receives programming content from the communications network.

45. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 44, wherein the device includes a host device having an interface for coupling with a POD module for providing conditional access to selected programming content.

46. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 45, wherein the selected programming content is selected by the system.

47. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 45, wherein the selected programming content includes VOD content.

48. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 38, wherein the identifying data includes a serial number pre-assigned to the device.

49. (Withdrawn) A method for use in an apparatus for receiving programming content from a communications network, the apparatus including a transmission mechanism and being identifiable by identifying data, the method comprising:

providing an interface for coupling with a device for effecting a communication to a server through the communications network, the communication including the identifying data, and an address of the device within the communications network; and

sending a message to the address if the apparatus has been removed from a connection to the communications network without authorization, the message causing the transmission mechanism to generate a detectable signal for locating the apparatus.

50. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein the address includes an IP address.

51. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein the address includes a MAC address.

52. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein the identifying data includes a serial number pre-assigned to the apparatus.

53. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein the detectable signal contains information concerning a serial number pre-assigned to the apparatus.



54. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, further comprising modulating signals representing the communication.

55. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein the apparatus comprises an entertainment unit.

56. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 55, wherein the entertainment unit includes a TV unit.

57. (Canceled)

58. (Currently Amended) The system according to Claim [[6]] 1, wherein the record comprises a host device identifier and wherein the server is further configured such that:

if it is determined that the second signal is received within the period, the server determines whether the information identifying the device, contained in the second signal, matches [[a]] the host device identifier from ~~a user~~ the record ~~associated with the user~~; and

responsive to determining that the information identifying the device, contained in the second signal, does not match the host device identifier from the ~~user~~ record ~~associated with the user~~, the server prompts the operator to investigate a potential unauthorized host replacement.

59. (Currently Amended) The system according to Claim 58, wherein the server is further configured such that, responsive to determining that the information identifying the device, contained in the second signal, does not match the host device identifier from the ~~user~~ record ~~associated with the user~~, the server communicates with the point-of-deployment (POD) module to limit access to the network.

60. (Canceled)

61. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim [[34]] 29, wherein the record comprises a host device identifier, further comprising the additional steps of:

if it is determined that the second signal is received within the period, determining whether the information identifying the device, contained in the second signal, matches [[a)] the host device identifier from a user ~~the record associated with the user~~; and

responsive to determining that the information identifying the device, contained in the second signal, does not match the host device identifier from the ~~user~~ record ~~associated with the user~~, prompting the operator to investigate a potential unauthorized host replacement.

62. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 61, further comprising the additional step of, responsive to determining that the information identifying the device, contained in the second signal, does not match the host device identifier from the ~~user~~ record ~~associated with the user~~, communicating with the point-of-deployment (POD) module to limit access to the network.